Executive Summary

The Department's Strategic Plan for Accessibility (Plan) was envisioned in 2002. The Plan was intended to present to the MDNR Management Team a broad overview of the work required in order for Department programs, facilities and services to be inclusive and comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Plan development began in January of 2002 and continued into November 2002, when the progress was stopped due to Departmental restructuring and changing priorities. The Accessibility Coordinator and Accessibility Liaisons (Accessibility Team) worked together to craft the Plan, and achieved approximately 75% completion when the Plan development was stopped.

In October 2004, the Accessibility Team resumed development of the Plan. The following represents the completed MDNR Strategic Plan for Accessibility. The major components include:

- accessibility training for MDNR staff;
- an accessibility assessment of all existing MDNR programs, services and facilities;
- involvement by public disability advocacy groups in MDNR's planning process;
- development of an action plan to correct existing accessibility deficiencies;
- development of inclusive new facilities, programs and services;
- a means to evaluate and document Departmental efforts and progress toward accessibility;
- A proposed timeline for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Accessibility.

The Strategic Plan for Accessibility will be an evolving process. Information gathered in the initial phases of the Plan will direct the activities to be accomplished in the later phases.

The final goal is for the MDNR to offer a comprehensive and consistent approach to inclusiveness in the Department's recreational programs, facilities and services.

Available funding, human resources, and support of this Plan by the MDNR Management Team are all critical to its success.

The Department's Mission Statement:

> "*The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations.*"

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DEPARTMENT) ACCESSIBILITY VISION -
The Department commits its human and financial resources to ensure that: 1) all programs, facilities and services comply with the State and Federal accessibility guidelines and standards and 2) DNR employees and the public are aware that the Department's programs, facilities and services comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

GOAL # 1: **DECISIONS AFFECTING DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES ARE INCLUSIVE, INCORPORATING ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS.**

Objective A: Educate DNR employees and public advisory groups about the legal rights of persons with disabilities.

Action items:

1) **Provide consistent training:**

   a) **Identify training needs within each B/D/O.**

   b) **Assess current training opportunities;**

   c) **Develop training programs, pertinent to staff job responsibilities;**

   d) **Arrange training sessions;**

   e) **Track the training accomplishments within each B/D/O.**

2) **Routinely and consistently disseminate applicable information to employees and public user groups regarding current standards, proposed changes to the standards, statutes, case law and Department procedures.**

   a) **Assess available information and resources;**

   b) **Determine the applicability of the information to the employees within each B/D/O.**

   c) **Develop information manuals for staff;**

   d) **Develop and update Department accessibility procedures;**

      o **Printed materials**
        http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.00.01.htm
      o **Accommodations for meetings and events (must develop)**
      o **Processing complaints**
        http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.00.03.htm
      o **Effective Communication (must develop)**
      o **Web-based information (must develop)**
      o **ADA - Facility Accessibility Exemption**
        http://dnrintranet/pdfs/divisions/fosb/asdproc/22.02.01.htm

     f) Develop a strategy for sharing information with staff and the public.

     g) Prepare DNR response to proposed changes of standards, coordinating the response through the State of Michigan's ADA Coordinator.

3) Address and incorporate accessibility issues early on in the planning/visioning aspects of all new construction projects and program development.

Objective B: Assist B/D/Os with program development and implementation.

Action items:

1) Provide guidance and consultation regarding:
   a) Accessibility reference materials and resources;
   b) Department policies and procedures;
   c) Interpretation of the guidelines;
   d) Intranet Q&A.

2) Assist B/D/O's outreach efforts:
   a) Establish points of contact with disability resources, including the State of Michigan ADA Coordinator; the Great Lakes Disability and Technical Assistance Center, (GLDBTAC), the National Center on Accessibility (NCA), the U. S. Access Board, The U. S. Department of Justice, (DOJ);
   b) Establish a point of the contact and maintain a current list of public user-groups, including Disabilities Today, Paralyzed Vets, and Centers for Independent Living, etc.

GOAL # 2: THE DEPARTMENT HAS A DETAILED PLAN TO BRING NON-COMPLIANT PROGRAMS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES INTO COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.

Objective A: Inventory the Department's programs, facilities and services.

Action items:

1) Define Department programs
   a) What are the program elements
   b) What is needed by individuals with disabilities to participate in each program;

2) Identify all Department Services
   a) What are the service elements
   b) What is needed by individuals with disabilities to use each service.

3) Identify all existing facilities;

4) Identify any new or proposed facilities, programs and services and the time frame for development;

5) **Develop an effective, uniform accessibility compliance check list for all Departmental facilities, programs and services;**

6) **Develop an efficient and user-friendly inventory database to track and monitor all programs, facilities and services.**

7) **Annually update the overall "master list" of accessible elements including all new construction and additions to services or programs.**

Objective B: **Evaluate programs, facilities and services for compliance with State and Federal accessibility guidelines.**

Action items:

1) **Train internal audit teams to evaluate programs, facilities and services OR hire the services of an outside agency to conduct the evaluations;**

2) **Identify existing program, facilities and services that comply and those that have deficiencies. Enter this information into the database;**

3) **Analyze and summarize the compliance status of each facility and program.**

Objective C: **Prioritize noncompliant programs, facilities and services that require action to become compliant.**

Action items:

1) **Present compliance status report to B/D/Os and request their priorities for action, including a suggested schedule of implementation to improve each program, facility and service;**

2) **Compile the B/D/Os prioritized list into a Department prioritized list, considering:**

   a) **Target dates for completion;**

   b) **Percentage of each type of facility or program to be updated;**

   c) **The geographic distribution of types of facilities that are to be updated.**

3) **Present the Department's priorities to focus groups, advisory groups and the general public and request input;**

4) **Revise priorities for action, as needed;**

5) **Present revised priorities and compliance status report to DNR Management Team for endorsement.**

Objective D: **Implement the Department compliance plan.**

Action items:

1) **Convey the Department compliance plan to the B/D/Os and staff for implementation;**

2) **Convey the compliance plan to the general public, focus groups and & advisory groups for information;**

Objective E: Monitor progress of the plan.

Action items:

1) Annual progress report of accessibility activity within each B/D/O;
2) Database is updated to reflect activity annually;
3) Submit the Department progress report to DNR management team.

GOAL # 3:   FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY.

Objective A: Identify operational costs and personnel needs for:

1) Inventory and training;
2) Database development and management;
3) Materials and outreach.

Objective B: B/D/Os identify additional funding needs for program and facility upgrades.

Action items:

Each B/D/O identifies the costs associated with updating the facilities and programs for which they have management responsibility.

Objective C: Pursue grants and other outside funding sources and resources.

Action items:

1) Each B/D/O identifies potential funding sources to upgrade facilities, programs and services within their B/D/O;
2) Pursue partnerships with municipalities and local governmental agencies, private organizations, federal agencies and other state agencies;
3) Set aside or establish a lump sum of annual Department or B/D/O budget to improve and upgrade existing identified facilities, programs or services.

GOAL # 4:   EFFECTIVELY CONVEY INFORMATION REGARDING ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES TO THE PUBLIC AND DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES.

Objective A: Maximize effectiveness of current communication methods.

Action items:

1) Review, evaluate and improve written materials, DNR web-based information, video, press releases;
2) Collaborate with the DNR Office of Communication;
3) Respond to public complaints and improve our facilities and programs accordingly;
4) Ensure that posters listing the rights of the public to file an accessibility complaint and the complaint procedures are evident at all DNR operated and managed facilities.

Objective B: Devise additional means to communicate news of DNR's accessible facilities and programs.

Action items:

1) Utilize Radio, TV, NCA Showcase, Commercial Magazines, E-mail List Service, Special Interest Groups;

2) Showcase DNR accessible facilities and programs through special events;

3) Develop an area of the DNR intranet and the DNR Internet to:

   a) Communicate accessibility successes and initiatives to employees and the public.

   b) Search engine feature to highlight accessible elements for each B/D/O.

4) Submit DNR completed projects, programs or services to national institutes, or publication for recognitions and greater exposure.

GOAL # 5: THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN ACHIEVING THE DNR ACCESSIBILITY VISION IS EVALUATED. THESE EVALUATIONS ARE USED TO MODIFY THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN, AS NEEDED.

Objective A: Identify the best means to monitor the Department's compliance with accessibility requirements, which are dynamic.

Action items:

1) Consult with other state and federal agencies for guidance and examples of effective compliance monitoring instruments;

2) Determine the most efficient and most cost effective compliance monitoring methods;

3) Develop DNR compliance monitoring process to be used.

Objective B: Implement compliance monitoring.

Action items:

1) Locate (per B/D/O) the program areas and establish geographic boundaries for monitoring;

2) Conduct monitoring of the geographic areas on a rotating basis;

3) Establish specific review periods for internal assessment annually or bi-annually;

4) Compile the results of the compliance monitoring and report results to the DNR Management Team and to the State ADA Coordinator.

MDNR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

TASK	Nov.2004	Dec. 2004	Jan. 2005	Feb. 2005	Mar. 2005	Apr. 2005	May. 2005	Jun. 2005	Jul. 2005	Aug. 2005	Sep. 2005	Oct. 2005	Nov. 2005	Dec. 2005	Jan. 2006	Feb. 2006	Mar. 2006	Apr. 2006	May. 2006	Jun. 2006	Jul. 2006	Aug. 2006	Sep. 2006	Oct. 2006	Nov. 2006
Complete the Strategic Plan	X	X																							
Establish Implementation Team		X																							
Develop Accessibility Training and Provide to the Implementation Team			X	X																					
Identify DNR Programs, Services and Facilities			X	X																					
Offer Accessibility Training to DNR Staff and Public Advisory Groups					X	X	X																		
Develop effective survey tool to assess Accessibility of Programs, Services and Facilities				X	X	X																			
Conduct accessibility assessments of programs and services							X	X																	
Conduct accessibility assessments of facilities								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Compile and analyze the assessment data																		X	X	X					
Develop DNR Accessibility Compliance Plan to improve deficient programs, services and facilities.																					X	X			
Implement the DNR Accessibility Compliance Action Plan																						X	X		→
Self-Evaluation of Progress																									→

November 2004